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Message Text

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21
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 EB-07 /065 W
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R 240845Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1941
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5230

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: USSAEC, ECON, PDEV, SA
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CHANGES IN SAG MINISTERIAL POSTINGS

SUMMARY: IMMINENT CHANGES WHICH WILL RESHAPE THE SAUDI DEVELOPMENT MINISTRIES AND MAY BRING IN NEW MINISTERS ARE EXPECTED. US/SAUDI JOINT COMMISSION MAY COME UNDER CENTRAL PLANNING, BUT THIS IS STILL UNDECIDED. END SUMMARY

1. SURVEY OF MIDDLE-LEVEL SOURCES INDICATES THAT SAG IS LIKELY TO TAKE EARLY DECISION FOR RESHAPING OF CENTRAL PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND MAY PROMOTE AT LEAST ONE OF THE OLDER MINISTERS TO MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO.

2. MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE FROM U/SAUDI JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION STANDPOINT IS STRUGGLE NOW GOING ON TO CHANGE NAME OF CENTRAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION OT MINISTRY OF CENTRAL PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION. TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENCY HEADED BY ABDUL MALIK FARRASH WOULD BE MOVED INTO NEW MINISTRY WHICH WOULD LIKELY REMAIN UNDER HISHAM NAZER. QUESTION OF WHETHER MINISTRY OF FINANCE WOULD LOSE US/SAUDI JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION SUPERVISION REMAINS UNSETTLED. EMBASSY INCLINED TO THINK NOT.

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3. SECOND BIG CHANGE IS CREATION OF INDUSTRIAL

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DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION, HOWEVER THERE REMAINS QUESTION WHETHER THIS ORGANIZATION (OR POSSIBLY MINISTRY) WOULD INCLUDE PORTIONS OF PETROMIN WHICH ARE NOW RESPONSIBLE FOR ESTABLISHING HYDROCARBON INDUSTRY. EMBASSY AGAIN BELIEVES THAT TAHER (AND YAMANI) WILL RETAIN PETROMIN INTACT IN SPITE OF WIDESPREAD CRITICISM WHICH RESULTED FROM BREAK-DOWN IN RIYADH REFINERY THAT CAUSED MAJOR GASOLINE SHORTAGE IN CAPITAL. BREAKDOWN CAUSED BY FAILURE OF JAPANESE PUMPS. TAHER IS WORRKED DUE TO HIGH LEVEL CRITISM DIRECTED AT HIM. POLITICAL PROBLEM IS THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE RESENTED BY YAMANI, WHO WE THINK COULD SUCCESSFULLY OPPOSE IT, - AS LONG AS HE REMAINS MINISTER OF PETROLEUM.

4. ACCORDING TO DR. SULEIMAN SULAIM, IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT MININFO ANQARY WILL BE KICKED UPSTAIRS TO POSITION OF MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO. (FYI: SULAIM ACCOMPANIED PRINCE FAHD TO PARIS THIS WEEK). HASSAN MISHARI STILL WANTS TO HAVE THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THERE ARE TO OR THREE OTHER CHANGES BEING RUMOURED BUT NONE WILL AFFECT US/SAUDI ECONOMIC RELATIONS TO THE EXTENT THAT THE CHANGE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE CENTRAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION WILL. FAYIZ BADR IS LIKELY TO TAKE OVER THE INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION (HE WAS DENIED A "SUPER-GRADE" PROMOTION LAST WEEK IN CURRENT PRESENT POSITION) AND U.S. GRADUATE ECONOMIST DR. FAYSAL BISHAR IS LIKELY TO BECOME NUMBER TO NAZER.

5. A GOD SOURCE BELIEVES THESE CHANGES WILL BE MADE WITHIN A MONTH. CONSIDERING NATURE OF CONTENTIOUS BUREAUCRATIC ISSUES INVOLVED, THIS MAY BE TOO FAST A SCHEDULE. HOWEVER, ALL SOURCES AGREE THE NEW SAG TEAM IS MOVING FASTER AND FASTER, EVEN ON TOUGH DECISIONS.
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